



UP TO THE SOURCE

Adoratio with St. John Paul II

FOR YOUTH

The Great Question, the Real Question

From the Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II to the Youth of the World on the Occasion of International Youth Year (*Dilecti amici*), March 31, 1985.

The question about eternal life...

What must I do so that my life may have value, have meaning? This earnest question comes from the lips of the young man in the Gospel in the following form: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Is a person who puts the question in this form speaking a language still intelligible to the people of today? Are we not the generation whose horizon of existence is completely filled by the world and temporal progress? We think primarily in earthly categories. If we go beyond the limits of our planet, we do so in order to launch interplanetary flights, transmit signals to the other planets and send cosmic probes in their direction.

All this has become the content of our modern civilization. Science together with technology has

discovered in an incomparable way man's possibilities with regard to matter, and they have also succeeded in dominating the interior world of his thoughts, capacities, tendencies and passions.

But at the same time it is clear that, when we place ourselves in the presence of Christ, when he becomes the confidant of the questionings of our youth, we cannot put the question differently from how that young man put it: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Any other question about the meaning and value of our life would be, in the presence of Christ, insufficient and unessential.

For Christ is not only the "good teacher" who shows the paths of life on earth. He is the witness to that definitive destiny which the human person has in God himself. He is the

witness to man's immortality. The Gospel which he proclaimed with his lips is definitively sealed by the Cross and the Resurrection in the Paschal Mystery. "Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him." In his Resurrection Christ has also become the permanent "sign of contradiction" before all programmes incapable of leading man beyond the frontier of death. (...)

Dear brothers and dear sisters, if you wish to talk to Christ and to accept all the truth of his testimony, you must... acquire interior detachment with regard to all this rich and fascinating reality that makes up "the world." You must make up your mind to ask the question about eternal life. For, the form of this world is passing away, and each of us is subject to this passing. Man is born with the prospect of the day of his death in the dimension of the visible world; at the same time, man, whose interior reason for existence is to go beyond himself, also bears within himself everything whereby he goes beyond the world: He is the image and likeness of God.

Everything whereby man goes beyond the world not only justifies the question about eternal life but in

fact makes it indispensable. This is the question that people have long been asking themselves, not only in the sphere of Christianity but also outside it. You too must find the courage to ask it, like the young man in the Gospel. Christianity teaches us to understand temporal existence from the perspective of the Kingdom of God, from the perspective of eternal life. Without eternal life, temporal existence, however rich, however highly developed in all aspects, in the end brings man nothing other than the ineluctable necessity of death.

Now there is an opposition between youth and death. Death seems far distant from youth. And it is. But since youth means the plan for the whole of life... during youth too it is essential to ask the question about the end. Human experience left to itself says the same as Sacred Scripture: "It is appointed for men to die once." The inspired writer adds: "And after that comes judgment." And Christ says: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die." So ask Christ, like the young man in the Gospel: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"



Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati

Litany of Young Saints

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| St. Kizito, teenager, martyr of Uganda | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. John Berchmans, student of Theology | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Bernadette of Lourdes, friend of Mary | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Agnes of Rome, virgin and martyr | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Aquilina of Lebanon, martyr and convert | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Tarsicius, altarboy, martyr of the Eucharist | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| Sts. Jacinta and Francisco of Fatima, shepherds | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, college student | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Aloisius Gonzaga, religious | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Stanislaw Kostka, novice | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Maria Goretti, martyr and virgin | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Pelagius of Cordoba, martyr | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| Bl. Andrew Phu Yen, protomartyr of Vietnam | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Kateri Tekawitha, Lily of the Mohawks | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. Dominic Savio, seminarian | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, virgin and writer | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| Bl. Chiara Badano, student and saint | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| St. José Sánchez del Río, martyr | <i>Pray for Us</i> |
| Bl. Carlo Acutis, teenager | <i>Pray for Us</i> |



A Prayer for the Youth by St. John Paul II

O Lord Jesus Christ,
keep us, your young people,
in your love.

Let us hear your voice and believe what you say,
for you alone have the words of life.

Teach us how to profess our faith, bestow our love,
and impart our hope to others.

Make us convincing witnesses to your Gospel
in a world so much in need of your saving grace.

Make us the new people of the Beatitudes,
that we may be the salt of the earth
and the light of the world

at the beginning of the Third Christian Millennium!

Mary, Mother of the Church, protect and guide us,
the young men and women of the Twenty-first Century.

Keep us all close to your maternal heart. Amen.



Christ and the Rich Young Ruler, Heinrich Hoffmann, 1889

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